

House Appropriations Committee:  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

January 31, 2011

EXHIBIT 13  
DATE Feb. 7, 2011  
HB 316

Our family and business, Midland Bull Test opposes Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117). The Stillwater County Economic Development Office, coordinator salary, and activities thereof are currently funded exclusively through Stillwater County's allocation of the metalliferous mines license taxes.

Passage of this bill will reduce the amount of resources the Economic Development Office has to assist local business and non-profits, possibly leading towards a reduction in overall services. The Stillwater County Economic Development Office provides technical assistance, training, and grant writing services to businesses and organizations throughout Stillwater County.

They have been extremely helpful to our family business in helping us receive approximately \$57,000.00 in GTA funding to help us complete and promote our investment in technology to measure efficiency in beef cattle. Our total investment approached \$800,000 in this system and we were getting pretty strapped for funds to promote and educate producers on the value of selecting for this genetic trait, which science has shown to have the potential to reduce feed and pasture intakes by as much as 25%.

Thru the GTA funds that the Stillwater County Economic Development Office helped us secure, we were able to reach nearly 60,000 ranches, extension offices, banks, etc.. In just 3 years the focus of many beef producers has been refocused to using such efficiency measuring tools. We have had numerous foreign country producer tours held at our facility the last year, as well as seeing a very strong support from ranchers in investing in these cattle. We will also be hosting the national BIF (Beef Improvement Federation) tour this summer. BIF is the largest consortium of rancher and cattle researchers in North America and it is an honor to have them stop at Midland to see our facilities and technology.

Also, major breed associations, such as American Angus have used our data bases on feed efficiency to help build the first Angus efficiency selection tool.

You can have the best genetics or technology in the world, but if you don't market it, no one will know. That is what GTA allowed us to do. We also added another 2 full time employees, where previously we only had part time.

In closing, we need to continue to invest in Montana business. Programs such as Stillwater County Economic Development Office Programs provide a vital link and assistance for Montana business to access such resources.

Respectfully

Leo McDonnell

Midland Bull Test 1640 Hwy 10 Columbus, MT 59019

February 4, 2011

Chairman Walter McNutt  
Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

RE: Oppose Section 3, HB 316 (Revising the allocation of metalliferous mines license tax)

Chairman McNutt and Committee Members,

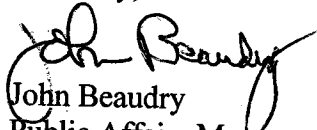
Stillwater Mining Company has been paying metalliferous mines license tax for over twenty years. The amount paid varies from year to year and has been over \$4 Million per year. The 25% allocation to the counties in which our mines are located funds the county hard-rock mine trust account, planning & economic development activities plus, elementary and high school needs. The trust accounts were established in the event of a 50% or greater reduction in workforce or mine closure.

The annual allocation of metal mines license tax revenues is part of the East Boulder Hard Rock Mining Impact Plan. Sweet Grass, Stillwater and Park Counties participate in this allocation annually. Stillwater Mining Company has worked in a collaborative manner with local governments to mitigate impacts of mining. The annual allocation of metalliferous mines license tax to counties is one of the mitigating measures.

Reducing the allocation of metalliferous mines license tax to counties adversely affects the counties hard-rock mine trust accounts, planning & economic development activities plus, elementary and high school funding in the communities where our mines are located.

Please oppose the reduction in allocation of metalliferous mines license tax to counties experiencing fiscal or economic impacts from large-scale mineral developments as proposed in Section 3 of HB 316.

Sincerely,

  
John Beaudry  
Public Affairs Manager  
Stillwater Mining Company

Cc: Park, Stillwater and Sweet Grass County Commissioners.



**Kathleen Ralph**

**220 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St.**

**Columbus, MT 59019**

Home phone & fax: 406-322-1117

eMail: [k.a.ralph@gmail.com](mailto:k.a.ralph@gmail.com)

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January 26, 2011

House Appropriations Committee:  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117). Monies from the mines license taxes support Stillwater County's Economic Development Office, which has been very active in promoting local business and non-profits. The salary of the Stillwater County Economic Development officer is paid exclusively through Stillwater County's allocation of the metalliferous mines license taxes and we cannot afford to lose her services.

In the past six months, Melissa Kramer, the Economic Development Officer has directly assisted me as a member of the Stillwater County Library Board and in planning for a community garden in Columbus. In addition, she has facilitated training for various small businesses and non-profits in the county, and helped with grant-writing. No one else provides this kind of support and information in our county.

Passage of this bill will reduce the amount of resources the Economic Development Office has to assist local business and non-profits, and may jeopardize our continued economic growth. I respectfully ask your support in opposing Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Ralph

To: House Appropriations Committee  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Jan 31, 2011

Greetings,

As a resident and small business owner in Stillwater County I have often benefitted from the services provided by the County's Economic Development Office. In addition, and on behalf of other County businesses, I have partnered on numerous occasions with the Office's Coordinator, Melissa Kramer. The end outcome of this is that the economic climate has been relatively stable and with optimism for future growth.

Your Committee will be addressing HB 316 to redistribute certain revenue and income to the State general fund. Passage of this bill will reduce the amount of resources available to county Economic Development Offices as they assist local business and non-profits. The expected reduction in overall services will deprive business from the expertise provided for technical assistance, training, and grant writing services.

Despite numerous evidence to the contrary, I keep hearing some say "Montana is not business friendly". I suggest that the repercussions from the passage of HB 316 will give support to the naysayers.

I strongly request that this bill be soundly rejected by the House Appropriations Committee.

Respectfully,

Charles J. Sangmeister  
35A Stanley Coulee Way  
Nye, MT 59061-8056

January 27, 2011

10A Kem Lane  
Absarokee, MT 59001  
406-328-4084

House Appropriations Committee  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

RE: Opposition to Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117).

Chairman and Committee Members

As owner of Becky's Berries I **strongly oppose** Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117).

Stillwater County Economic Development Office has been of assistance to my business over the past 4 years. With the assistance of the Economic Development Coordinator, my business received a Growth Through Agriculture Grant and several training grants.

The programs and seminars provided through the Economic Development Office have assisted my business in growing from 15 retail stores to over 90 stores across the state and nation. The services through the Economic Development Office are essential to small businesses in Stillwater County.

Please oppose the passage of HB316.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Becky Stahl".

Becky Stahl



Pottery • Montana Wool • Knitting Shop

February 2, 2011

Montana House Appropriation Committee

Montana House of Representatives

PO Box 200400

Helena, MT 59620-0400

RE: The Muddy Lamb Studio, a small business located in Fishtail, **OPPOSES** Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117)

To Whom It May Concern:

The Muddy Lamb Studio opened their doors in 2008 to the Fishtail community. We are a community based studio where we teach the arts of working with wool and clay. We give classes in knitting, spinning, felting, and pottery. In order to make the studio work, we have a retail shop which consists of a full knitting shop and Made In Montana plus other gifts for the tourists. The learning curve in operating a retail business along with the work studio was huge. Fortunately, Melissa Kramer, coordinator for Stillwater County Economic Development came to our assistance! She stopped in our doors one day to introduce herself and ask if there is anything she could help us with. We have attending business training sessions and had a personal training session on Quick Books all through the Stillwater County Economic Development's funding and help. We have found our training through them to be excellent and has **GREATLY** improved our business skills. It is no surprise to say we have struggled in starting a business in today's economy. Without the help of Melissa Kramer, I am not sure what Muddy Lamb's status would be right now.

The Muddy Lamb Studio **STONGLY OPPOSES**, Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117). **Please reconsider this amendment. You would be hurting many small businesses in Stillwater County. As you probably know, we CAN NOT afford to continue shutting out the small business owner.**

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter!

Sincerely,

Holly Russell

Manager

*Beartooth*

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA, INC.

PO Box 180, 604 West Front Street, Joliet, MT 59041 406-962-3914 FAX 406-962-3647

January 27, 2011

House Appropriations Committee:  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

RE: HB 316

To Whom It May Concern,

Beartooth Food and AG Center at Beartooth RC&D has been a partner of Stillwater and Sweetgrass Counties in providing business assistance throughout our five county region. We are opposed to reducing the amount of funding to Stillwater County as it would have a negative impact on the counties of Stillwater and Sweetgrass and their ability to fund necessary programs such as the Stillwater Economic Development Office which has been integral in maintaining a strong economy in Stillwater County by developing business trainings, technical assistance and grant development resulting in business growth, increased economic diversification and more jobs in the region.

Sincerely,

*Joel Bertolino*

Joel Bertolino  
Beartooth RC&D  
PO Box 180  
Joliet, MT 59041  
406-962-3914

*Citizens Building Stronger Communities*

**Mandeville  
Agency  
Inc.**

A Member of

**Montana  
Insurance  
Managers**

*We Cover Montana*

**- Insurance -**

Home & Auto

Business, Farm & Ranch

Life & Health

House Appropriations Committee  
Montana House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Dear Sir or Madame:

I am writing in opposition of Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117). The Stillwater County Economic Development Office is currently funded through Stillwater County's allocation of the metalliferous mines license tax. The Stillwater County Economic Development office has helped our business obtain grants for training of employees which helped make it possible to add a new hire this year. This is a small but good example of how a local economic development office is effective in growing an economy in a time when growth of any kind is greatly needed and welcome. To reduce the resources that go to the local economic development office will reduce the level of service offered to local small businesses. Small business is the key to economic vitality of our state. Taking money from the counties and allocating it to the state is a bad idea. I urge you to leave the allocation of the funds alone and allow economic development efforts to continue to work where they are most effective, at the county level.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mandeville Insurance Agency, Inc.

  
Webb C. Mandeville, President

130 S. Pratten  
P. O. Box 69  
Columbus, MT 59019  
[www.mandeville-insurance.com](http://www.mandeville-insurance.com)



Tel. (406) 322-5361  
Fax (406) 322-5461  
Toll Free 1-800-435-9439  
[inquiry@mandeville-insurance.com](mailto:inquiry@mandeville-insurance.com)



# ***Beartooth***

**RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA, INC.**

PO Box 180, 604 West Front Street, Joliet, MT 59041 406-962-3914 FAX 406-962-3647

January 27, 2011

House Appropriations Committee:  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

RE: HB 316

To Whom It May Concern,

Beartooth RC&D has been a partner of Stillwater and Sweetgrass Counties in providing business assistance throughout our five county region. We are opposed to reducing the amount of funding to these counties through the metal mines tax as it would have a negative impact on the counties of Stillwater and Sweetgrass and their ability to fund necessary programs such as the Stillwater Economic Development Office. This program has been integral in maintaining a strong economy in Stillwater County by developing business trainings, technical assistance and grant development resulting in business growth, increased economic diversification and more jobs in the region.

Sincerely,



Chuck Egan  
Board Chairman  
Beartooth RC&D  
PO Box 180  
Joliet, MT 59041  
406-962-3914



Kendall R. Hartman

Outdoor Views

P.O. Box 52

Park City, MT. 59063

[www.outdoorviews.com](http://www.outdoorviews.com)

January 30, 2011

To:

House Appropriations Committee

Montana House of Representatives

PO Box 200400

Helena, MT 59620-0400

I am writing this letter in opposition to Section 3 of LC527 of HB316 which amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117). This money has been currently utilized in our county for economic development activities that assist not only our local business but many of its workers. I have witnessed the growth of many small businesses through training programs tailored to our small business community needs. Melissa Kramer, the coordinator visits our small businesses to find out the needs, finds resources to assist the business, develops training programs that are relevant to our needs and follows up, provides assistance in finding and writing grants, finds resources for assistance and partners with other agencies. This assistance has created jobs, trained workers, helped business start-up and grow and helped retain businesses in our community. I believe our program should be looked at as a model and funding maintained at current levels. To reduce this funding is to negatively impact a vital growth mechanism in Stillwater County. Your opposition to this amendment is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kendall R. Hartman



# Stillwater County Economic Development

Melissa Kramer, Coordinator

PO Box 881  
Phone: (406) 322-8050

809 E. 4th Ave. N Suite C.  
Fax: (406) 322-1118

Columbus, MT 59019  
Email: mkramer@stillwater.mt.gov

January 31, 2011

Montana House Appropriations Committee  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

RE: Stillwater County Economic Development Strongly Opposes Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117).

Chairman and Committee Members

Stillwater County Economic Development strongly opposes Section 3 of LC527 of HB 316 that amends the "Disposition of Metalliferous Mines License Taxes" (MCA Section 15-37-117). The Stillwater County Economic Development Office, coordinator salary, and activities thereof are currently funded exclusively through Stillwater County's allocation of the metalliferous mines license taxes.

Passage of this bill will reduce the amount of resources the Economic Development Office has to assist local business and non-profits, possibly leading towards a reduction in overall services. The Stillwater County Economic Development Office provides business technical assistance, training, and grant writing services to businesses and organizations throughout Stillwater County.

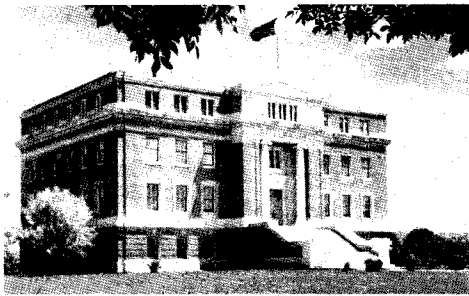
Stillwater County Economic Development works with over 70 businesses on a routine basis depending on their needs to provide technical assistance and apprise them of training opportunities. This provides the opportunity for marketing of state and local programs available for rural business assistance.

In the past three years Stillwater County Economic Development has worked with businesses and organizations to secure over \$350,000 in grants. Reducing funding for the Economic Development Office may potentially reduce the opportunity to continue providing services to business and organizations at these current levels.

I strongly urge the opposition of HB 316.

Sincerely,

Melissa Kramer



**COUNTY OF STILLWATER**  
**STATE OF MONTANA**  
**STILLWATER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**P. O. BOX 970**  
**COLUMBUS, MONTANA 59019**

February 7, 2011

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning  
Montana Legislature

**RE: Stillwater County Opposes HB 316**

Distinguished Chair and Members:

Stillwater County **opposes** revising the allocation of metalliferous mines license tax as proposed in **HB 316** under section 3 and the added 10% of remaining proceeds in section 4.

Stillwater County distributes these taxes first to a trust account that is set up by statute to be used if a mine closes or if there is a 50 % reduction in work force. The remaining money is distributed three ways between the County and the affected elementary and high school districts.

By statute Stillwater County can only use this money for economic development. The county's businesses have benefitted greatly since the addition of a County Economic Development Department. New and established business have taken advantage of this department through training and grant funding opportunities researched by the Economic Development Coordinator. Successful businesses not only provides jobs but also contributes to the County tax base.

Stillwater County **opposes** changing the percentage hard rock mine counties receive in the disposition of metalliferous mines license tax through **HB 316**.

Sincerely,

**STILLWATER BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Dennis Shupak, Chair

Gerald W. Dell

Maureen Davey

/ss/



## STILLWATER COUNTY TREASURER

**BEVERLEY M<sup>C</sup>CURRY**

**P. O. BOX 149**

**COLUMBUS, MONTANA 59019**

**Ph: (406) 322-8020**

**Fax: (406) 322-8027**

**email: [bmccurry@stillwater.mt.gov](mailto:bmccurry@stillwater.mt.gov)**

*February 4, 2011*

**62<sup>nd</sup> Legislature**

**Montana State Capital**

**Helena, Montana**

RE: *Opposing HB #316*

*Dear Montana Legislative Representatives,*

***Deny the enactment of House Bill #316.*** *The impact at the local-County level of funding for necessary services would be greatly affected.*

*In our back door, operates the Stillwater Mining Company, a neighbor in high operational standards and great contributor of our tax base. In order to support the operation of this precious metals producer, our county must maintain over 800 miles of roads on which the workers travel along with the necessary bridge, weed, public safety, fire control, soil conservation, and various other services vital for sustaining our residents quality of life. Our schools provide exceptional education for the children of these hard working miners, our grocery store ensures their cupboards are full, and the various other businesses within our county boundaries count on the mine and their revenue shares to keep their doors open. Stillwater County must also be prepared in the event that this major employer of over 1200 people, would find it necessary to eliminate manpower if not the total operation of their process, and we must continue to plan for the future and the impact this could lead to.*

*If you allow this Bill to pass, you would be hurting Stillwater County. It is easy for you to set the pace for continued growth and prosperity for our County by saying, "NO"!!! Let Representative Cook suggest another form of additional revenue that doesn't withhold funds for Stillwater County.*

***"NO TO HB #316!!!"***

*As the Stillwater County Treasurer and Stillwater County taxpayer, please don't let this happen.*

*Sincerely,*

*Beverley M. Curry*  
Beverley McCurry